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ARTICLE I.

A CALM AND CANDID REVIEW OF SOME SPEECHES
ON EVOLUTION.

Whether for praise or for blame, it cannot be doubted that the whole agitation all over our Church respecting Columbia Seminary, has had its main origin with two individuals. Has it been, indeed, the unearthing of a dangerous concealed influence, which, brought chiefly by two men into the clear light of day, is being *slaughtered*? Then the Church has these two men to hold in especial honor for this great and useful service. On the other hand, has it been an unnecessary and hurtful excitement about nothing, arousing our fears about dangers imaginary, and stirring up baseless apprehensions through the exaggeration of trifles into real and frightful evils? Then the chief responsibility will still lie at the doors of two men alone. One of them has had an official position—in fact, two official positions—giving him enormous powers of both good and evil. But whether he has been doing our Church great beneficial service, or great damage, in these two official positions, is to be ascribed mainly to the support given him by his truly eminent colleague in all this work. The most popular and best beloved minister in our Synod, distinguished as a scholar and a theologian, eloquent as the golden-mouthed John of Constantinople, gentle and tender and affection-

ARTICLE V.

NATURAL LAW IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD. BY
HENRY DRUMMOND, F. R. S. E., F. G. S.

This work has deserved and received "golden opinions" from all sorts of men. When it first issued from the press it drew to itself more than common attention; and a more adequate appreciation of its leading thought, together with its full development and varied illustration, has served only to justify and confirm the original impression. The title fitly describes the purpose of the book, present throughout, forcibly urged, and richly illustrated. Some enthusiastic admirers have, we believe, gone so far as to compare it, as a book on the evidences, adapted to the latest phase of scientific scepticism, with Bishop Butler's Analogy, and to imagine that it as effectually exposes and explodes the prevailing forms of unbelief as that immortal and unique work confronted and confounded the less astute but more arrogant infidelity of the eighteenth century.

All this we think highly extravagant. Prof. Drummond is an orthodox believer, an ingenious thinker, and a vigorous writer, and his work we doubt not will prove a useful, and possibly a permanent, contribution to Christian apologetics. It is likely to be far more popular in the generation to which it is addressed than was the great work of the famous Anglican bishop, because it is far more readable, being enlivened with illustration throughout; for what Byron irreverently said of Milton, "A little heavy though no less divine," the most patient of readers will sometimes confess to be true of the thoughtful lucubrations of the excellent bishop. The truth is that Drummond is singularly unlike Butler. Indeed, he forms a much more striking contrast than likeness or companion-piece to the illustrious Bishop of Durham. His mind is not of an abstract order, but rather fitted to perceive, and even in some cases to imagine, analogies, whereas, of all abstract, didactic, and colorless arguments, Bishop Butler's great work takes the lead. Its eminent fairness, its transparent candor, its passionless truth constitutes a marked element of its power; while Drummond's

is ablaze with illustrations, always ingenious, always apt, from the first page to the last. The truth is, the inexhaustible fertility and not seldom the wit and the learning of his illustrations, would do credit to Cowley or to Macaulay, and have frequently reminded us of another Butler, not Joseph, the grave Bishop of Durham, but Samuel, the bantering and biting author of Hudibras.

We must confess that we think that one of the distinguishing excellences of Drummond borders on a vice or a weakness; in a word, that he is often the victim of his own ingenuity; that he finds or fancies a resemblance between the facts and phenomena of the natural and those of the spiritual world, where none really exists or was intended by the common and glorious Author of both. But that he does really bring out many of great force and value which had eluded all previous observers, or had been overlooked by all, it were gross injustice to deny.

The originality of Bishop Butler's work has been often affirmed and commended, and in a true and high sense it is strikingly original; *i. e.*, the conduct, development, and application of the argument are all his own. But the germinal thought is as old as Origen. The same thing is at least equally true of the noted work of Drummond. The framing and the fitting of the argument is his own proper and personal work. But the main idea is as old as the parables of our Lord. Still this does not detract from its originality or its value. In the case of Bishop Butler, the ground thought was the property of Origen, but the whole development and demonstration was Butler's, and in this the superlative value of the work consists. It is this that makes it what it is, a monument and a masterpiece among theological treatises specially suited to the needs of the day in which it appeared. The original hint of the picture may have been due to the most learned and ingenious of the Greek Fathers, but the whole filling up was his own, with all its details and in all its matchless acuteness and thoroughness. If to seize on a solitary and isolated thought and so construe it, so connect it, so combine it, so apply and employ it, as to make of it a great complete and permanent work—a work which shall be at once a bulwark and a landmark—

if this does not constitute the work original, we hardly know what does. The conception of the Parthenon may have been suggested to Ictinus; of St. Paul's Cathedral to Sir Christopher Wren; of St. Peter's at Rome to Michael Angelo; but the mere suggestion would scarcely invalidate the claim of either one of these renowned architects to the possession of great original genius. In like manner, as in the case of those great architects possibly, as in the case of the great work of Bishop Butler certainly, so in the case of Prof. Drummond, the idea of his work may have been old; it may have been common to himself and others; but the whole working out of the idea in all its details, with all its seemingly inexhaustible wealth of illustration, is all his own; and the work is as truly original as any that has appeared in the present day, and much more truly original than many which have been especially lauded for this rare and precious quality.

Very little if anything true can be absolutely original or perfectly new in relation either to the doctrines or to the defence of Christianity. For Christianity, in the substance as well as in the statement of its doctrines, in the sources and species of its illustrations, and in its lines of defence, is a strictly divine revelation. Its substance and methods, therefore, are to be embraced and embodied; not to be departed from and not to be improved upon. Accordingly we consider Prof. Drummond's work properly and eminently original. The whole staple of his argument and the whole structure of his argument is unborrowed and his own. The work is the fruit of the sweat of his own brow, the ripe product of his own mind and heart; although the seeds of all the truth it contains were scattered broadcast by the Great Sower who went forth to sow, whose seeds first germinated and grew into the great harvest of the completed Scriptures under the labor of his chosen apostles, and have been the life of all later growths in the Christian Church. Or, to borrow another illustration from our adored Lord, the Teacher of all teachers of divine truth, as the loaves which he gave into the hands of the disciples were multiplied in the hands of the disciples, so the truths which he originally taught have branched out in the

lessons of later teachers, inspired and uninspired, and will continue to spread out in every direction and department of human thought till "the last syllable of recorded time."

The parables of our Lord are incomparably the profoundest and the most beautiful as they are the most certain and luminous illustrations of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Our Saviour shows that the whole material world is a multiform and most expressive symbol of spiritual truth; and that as when the eyes of the prophet's servant were opened he saw the mountain filled with horses of fire and chariots of fire; and as when the disciples with whom he talked in his way to Emmaus had their eyes no longer "holden," but opened, they discovered in the mysterious stranger their risen Lord, so if our eyes were anointed we should see spiritual lessons of highest import graven on the face of nature by the hand of the Great Creator and perceive unnumbered natural laws in the spiritual world. Many now hidden but truly exquisite analogies and illustrations of the more subtle and sublime spiritual truths or phases of religious experience would beam upon us with "a light that never was by sea or land."

But when we pass out of the sacred precincts of the inspired Scriptures altogether and take up the writings of the Christian fathers, whose pious fancies and ingenious understandings were rendered active and sharp by their devout religious affections, we see that they too often discovered deep and beautiful and apt analogies in the natural world to the grandest truths in the spiritual, which entirely escape our grosser vision. The works of Augustine in particular are rich in these spiritual analogies which for the most part need to be pointed out to our duller eyes and colder hearts. Matthew Henry, all things considered, the best expositor of Sacred Scripture we have in English, is justly noted for his admirable faculty of bringing out these latent but real and highly striking analogies between the objects of the natural and the spiritual world. This very peculiarity of some of the best of the early fathers and of the great Nonconformist commentator has been signalled by Tayler Lewis in his truly original volume entitled "The Divine-

Human." We cannot think, therefore, that Drummond's work is original in any other sense than that in which Bishop Butler's work is original. But this is the only sense in which any work having the unfolding or the defence of Christian doctrine for its object should be original. His argument is for the most part solid and good throughout, the very best presentation of the general analogies which we have seen, and brought down to the last facts and phases of physical science. Many particular illustrations are striking and ingenious as well as just and new. We cannot, therefore, doubt that the book so widely read will do extensive good, especially for the class of persons for whom it is principally intended, men of science alienated from the Christian faith, in whole or in part, because of its supposed unfriendly aspect toward natural science, or the supposed inconsistency of some of its positions or statements with the established doctrines and demonstrations of science.

Now, it is impossible for any Christian scholar to set before him a more pious or profitable task than that of obviating or removing scientific difficulties, so far as they exist and are capable of removal or of adjustment in the present state of our scientific knowledge, and of the true interpretation of the sacred text. Of one thing all men of faith, and, it is to be hoped, most men of science, are equally persuaded—that there is, and there can be, no real contradiction between the two equally authentic revelations of God: the revelation of God in nature and the revelation of God in Scripture. Either or both may seem to stand in an attitude of hostility, because either or both may be misinterpreted or misrepresented. There is nothing more evidently due to truth, nothing more plainly demanded by justice, than that nothing should be done or declared or decided rashly and before the time. The grand canon and conclusion of Bacon will hold true, however, that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion. It cannot be doubted that some well-meaning but ill-informed theologians have given the enemies of the written word occasion to blaspheme by their ignorant interpretations of Scripture and perhaps more ignorant assaults on well-ascertained scientific conclu-

sions. It is not less certain that some men of science have with equal impiety and ignorance arraigned the Sacred Scriptures, and on their own interpretation of the written word, far from its true import and at variance with the received expositions of its most accredited apologists, affirmed that the opposition between the certainties of science and the statements of Scripture were irreconcilable. It is, therefore, manifestly the dictate of true philosophy, as it is the instinct and habit of enlightened piety, to maintain a wise suspension of judgment when any discrepancy is alleged between science and Scripture, and no satisfactory method of mutual conciliation immediately appears. This is undoubtedly the Baconian method. It is that which Lord Bacon, the Joshua who led the enslaved and imprisoned sciences out of the house of bondage into the land of promise, himself commended and practised. No man has spoken more wisely and weightily than he on this standing difficulty. No man has ever done more to extend the empire of science, and lay down her metes and bounds; to define the law of her progress and the limits within which she may profitably pursue her researches; and yet no man has spoken more reverently of the paramount authority of the divine Scriptures and of religious faith within her own sacred sphere, or has offered more humble and fervent prayer to God for the illumination of his grace to guide him into the deep mysteries of his works in the domain of natural law and of the natural world.

It might have been apprehended, and it has actually happened, that the praiseworthy desire of Drummond to disarm men of science of their groundless and perilous distrust of revealed truth as essentially at variance with scientific truth, should unconsciously lead him to lapse into a tone of undue anxiety to make the Scripture averments harmonise with the latest scientific conclusions; to deprecate with needless concern the dissent or the displeasure of scientific authorities; together with an equal and excessive eagerness to propitiate and gain the verdict of scientific men. This will seem to most Christians unlike the tone of the Apostle Paul, and even of Luther and Calvin, in dealing with kindred antagonists and kindred questions, so far as they arose in their days. The Apostle Paul spoke always with conscious

and commanding authority when he spoke in the name of God; and while the "burning questions" of his time, turning for the most part on Gnostic heresies, Jewish superstitions, and arrogant and fanciful speculations of the Greek philosophers and sophists, were different from those of our day, we can easily imagine the superb scorn, tempered by divine charity, which he would have hurled at the head of any man, however eminent, who should have intimated to him that any written revelation of God was to be discredited or discarded, because in opposition to any physical or metaphysical theory of the material universe. In this, as in so much else, both of doctrine and spirit, both Luther and Calvin would have proved themselves genuine "successors of the apostles."

The work is divided into chapters, each of which succeeds the other in an order at once natural and logical. So that there is a real unity and continual progress in the development of his theory. The subject of the first chapter is *Biogenesis*, or the origin of life. He shows that in no instance is natural life a spontaneous generation, but an imparted gift; and so of spiritual life, that it is not an education or an unfolding of latent powers from a hidden germ inherent in the soul, but the communication of a principle of life from God, the sempiternal source of all life. Huxley and Tyndall both confess that the doctrine of Biogenesis, or life only from life, is victorious along the whole line at the present day. Tyndall is reluctantly compelled to declare, "I affirm that no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independently of antecedent life." To which within the spiritual sphere corresponds our Lord's saying, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Thus the doctrine of regeneration by the sovereign agency of the Holy Ghost, creating the soul anew in Christ Jesus, is shown to be a kindred exercise of power to that by which he communicates natural life. Whole systems of religion, not only divergent but diametrically opposed, are embraced in the fact here demonstrated. No means, human or divine, can impart divine life without the supernatural personal working of the Holy Spirit. Whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh. The fruits of the Spirit are specifically different from the noblest

of the natural virtues; and are like the fruits of Paradise, "that never would in other climate grow." "The inquiry into the origin of life," says our author, "is the fundamental question alike of Biology and Christianity."

The title of the second chapter is *Degeneration*, illustrated in the fact of the fall and the consequent corruption of human nature. The images under which the sacred writers represent the spiritual degeneracy of man are hardly more appalling than those which naturalists employ to set forth his natural degeneration. The strong tendency to degeneration appears in every department of nature: in birds and beasts, in fruits and flowers. The noblest species left to themselves relapse into their original deformity or defects; and require assiduous culture to raise or restore them. Thus after the apostasy of man, the earth, under the shadow of sin and the curse of God, naturally brought forth thorns and briers. The same law holds with reference to the human race. In man there is an invariable tendency to return to barbarism when the higher influences are withdrawn or suspended. The ascent in the scale of civilisation under elevating agencies is always a visible struggle; and there is no instance of a nation emerging from barbarism to a higher order of life without contact or communication with a superior race.

As in nature, as in man, there is a constant tendency to death, so in the region of the spiritual life. It needs to be fostered after it has been formed by ordained means imbued with supernatural efficacy. In the man in whom the Spirit of life abides, the tendency to degeneration is arrested, and the new tendency of the regenerate soul is to rise to God as "fires ascending seek the sun."

The next chapter is on *Growth*, natural and spiritual, and the analogy between them. Behold the lilies, *how* they grow, spontaneously, unconsciously, from a principle implanted within them, fostered by favorable conditions. So the principle of spiritual life imparted to the soul in regeneration tends to a gracious development under the agencies which God has ordained—his word and providence, not alone, but accompanied by the Holy Ghost. The differentiating element of spiritual growth is spiritual life.

Morality based only on prudence and natural conscience, besides being superficial and external, is apt to be one-sided and partial. Christian principle, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, operating at all times and in every direction, is generative of every Christian virtue, and makes an harmonious and beautiful character. The Christian, like the poet, is born, not made. The life which dwells in Christ, as in a fountain, flows forth into him, and this continuous stream makes him not only to live, but grow.

The chapter on *Death* is very striking, showing that it consists essentially in an existence out of communion with God. He shows that the highest form of life is that which has the most ample and adequate environment, and is in fullest connexion therewith. The life of the tree is more limited than the life of the bird; the life of the bird than the life of man; the natural life and the spiritual life of man in communion with God is the highest form of life of which we can have any conception.

Mortification or death to the world and death to sin is the subject of the succeeding chapter. A mortal conflict is going on in the soul. If the believer does not put sin to death, sin will put him to death. Our Lord does not prescribe a partial abstinence from sin, or a gradual recovery, but an instant and absolute renunciation of it. Sin and holiness, faith and worldliness, are mutually incompatible and mutually exclusive. In the work of Prof. Drummond, the argument for the evidences of Christianity is made to take a step *in advance*. It now assumes the ground not merely of an analogy between the laws which obtain in the natural and in the spiritual world, but of the unity, in some sense, the *identity* of the two. If this could be demonstrated, the evangelical system would stand on a rational basis as incontestable as the ascertained laws of nature. The effect of this would be not merely to silence the batteries of natural science, from which the most formidable assaults have been made upon the towers and bulwarks of Zion, but they would be turned into powerful engines of defence. Such a demonstration, if universally admitted, could not make men receive with saving faith the truth as it is in Jesus. But even to make men who would otherwise be sceptics and agnostics speculative believers is a great

gain. But as even speculative infidelity is more a matter of the heart than of the head, we need not hope to see the day when all men shall yield even a speculative assent to the gospel of our salvation.

To show, however, what progress the germinal thought of this book has made, and is making, we may refer to a still more recent work of a wholly different character and purpose, but of marked ability entitled, *Modern Thought and the Ancient Church*. The book has just been issued from the London press. It is written by a Romanist. The design of it is to show that the pessimistic and atheistic views of Schopenhauer and others of the same way of thinking, is most effectually repelled and repressed by the theological teachings and authoritative *dicta* of the Church of Rome.¹ In the course of the work we find the following statements:

“Once purge the mind of anthropomorphic conceptions as to the divine government, and the notion of any essential opposition between the natural and the supernatural disappears. Sanctity, which means likeness to God, a partaking of the divine nature, is as truly a force as light or heat, and enters as truly into the great order of the universe. The religious mind conceives of the natural not as opposed to the supernatural, but as an outlying province of it; of the economy of the physical world, as the complement of the economy of grace. And to those who thus think, the great objection urged by so many philosophers, from Spinoza downwards—not to go further back—that miracles, as the violation of an unchangeable order, make God contradict himself, and so are unworthy of being attributed to the All-wise, is without meaning.”

Now these are very remarkable words, and give strong confirmation to the views so elaborately wrought out by Drummond.

At any rate, they serve to show the *trend* of the best and deepest modern thought in its relation to the government of God in the economy of the universe.

With these brief observations on some of the earlier chapters, and with no intention of going into a minute examination of Prof. Drummond's book, we may say that it is unusually suggestive. It will teach men to use their eyes, to use their imaginations, and

¹ *Ancient Religion and Modern Thought*. By William Samuel Lilly: London, 1884.

to use their reason ; such at least as may be teachable. If a man have any dormant capacity of being interested in scientific investigations in their relations not only to the well-being of men on earth, but to the highest questions which concern religion and the soul, the volume before us is well adapted to awaken it. The light which it incidentally throws upon many passages of Scripture by the palpable analogies in natural objects, arrangements, and processes is of great value. The writer seems to be at once truly liberal and strictly orthodox, even according to the Calvinistic standard. In a singularly interesting passage he illustrates a particular defect or deformity by referring as an illustration of the parasitic habit to the Romanist who devolves his salvation on the Church, and the Antinomian who rests in a perverted view of justification, showing that the Protestant as well as the Papist may err by a partial view of revealed truth and of practical righteousness.

J. M. ATKINSON.